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ART. V. — *Homer's Iliad* ; translated by WILLIAM MUNFORD. Boston : Little & Brown. 1846. 2 vols. 8vo.

THE appearance of these volumes is an interesting literary event. A translation of the *Iliad* coming from Virginia does more honor to that ancient commonwealth than her political dissertations, endless as they are, or even, if it be not too heretical to say so, than the Democratic creed embraced in the Resolutions of 1798. We have so long been accustomed to political talk from old Virginia, that a purely literary work, having no possible connection with "the party," strikes us as something unexpected, strange, and surprising. A translation of the *Iliad* coming out from Richmond, in the same year that Mr. Pleasants was barbarously murdered there on the "field of honor," suggests incongruous and contrasted ideas. But so it is.*

It is a coincidence, not without interest in literary history, that a translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was made in Virginia about two centuries before Mr. Munford's *Iliad* was completed, by George Sandys, the treasurer of the colony. We give, in a note below, the facts connected with this passage in the literary annals of the Ancient Dominion, as they probably are not generally known.† Before proceeding

* What Mr. Munford thought of duelling may be seen in the following characteristic note on the sharp censure which Sarpedon gives to Hector, in the fifth book.

"Sarpedon's character is conspicuous for magnanimity and independence. Great as Hector was, he rebukes him without fear or ceremony, and with extraordinary energy. Hector, too, though stung at heart, takes the reproof with exemplary patience, nobly resolving, as Diomed did on a similar occasion, to let his actions answer for him. According to the modern code of false honor, Diomed ought to have challenged Agamemnon, and Hector, Sarpedon, to 'give satisfaction' by a duel in a gentlemanly manner! But in those times of true heroism, such absurdities were unknown." — Vol. i., p. 181.

† George Sandys, the celebrated traveller and poet, was born in 1577, and died in 1643. The entry in the parish register styles him "Poetarum Anglorum sui sæculi facile Princeps." His travels commenced in 1610, the year in which Henry the Fourth of France was assassinated; and the account of them which he published passed through many editions. In 1621, he was appointed treasurer of the company in Virginia; a fact mentioned neither by Cibber, Chalmers, nor Ellis, nor in the *Biographie Universelle*, and only alluded to by Whalley in a note to Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*. He occupied the leisure he could command from official labors and the disturbances of Indian warfare with the translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,

to notice Mr. Munford's version, we will lay before our readers a brief sketch of his life.

William Munford was born in the county of Mecklenburg, Virginia, on the 15th of August, 1775. His ancestors were

which was published in 1632, under the title of "Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished, mythologized, and represented in Figures," Oxford, folio. A copy of this version, with the title-page and introduction torn out, is in the Boston Athenæum. Langbaine remarks, — "He will be allowed an excellent artist in it by learned judges; and he has followed Horace's advice of avoiding a servile translation, — 'Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus interpres,' — so he comes so near the sense of his author that nothing is lost; no spirits evaporate, in the decanting of it into English; and if there be any sediment, it is left behind."

Fuller (Worthies of England) says, — "He most elegantly translated Ovid's Metamorphoses into English verse; so that, as the soul of Aristotle was said to have transmigrated into Thomas Aquinas (because rendering his sense so naturally), Ovid's genius may seem to have passed into Master Sandys. He was a servant but no slave to his subject; well knowing that a translator is a person in *free custody*; *custody*, being bound to give the true sense of the author he translated; *free*, left at liberty to clothe it in his own expression."

Warton (Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope) says, that, when Sandys's Ovid fell into the hands of Pope, in his eighth or ninth year, "The raptures which these translations gave him were so strong, that he spoke of them with pleasure to the period of his life." Sandys enjoyed the intimate friendship of Lord Falkland, who addressed several poems to him. Old Michael Drayton, the author of the Polyolbion, in an Elegy "To George Sandys, Treasurer of the English Colony in Virginia," says: —

"And, worthy George, by industry and use
Let 's see what lines Virginia can produce;
Go on with Ovid as you have begun
With the first five books; let your numbers run
Glib as the former; so shall it live long,
And do much honor to the English tongue;
Entice the Muses thither to repair,
Entreat them gently, train them to that air."

Stith (History of Virginia, p. 303) says: —

"But in the midst of these tumults and alarms, the Muses were not silent. For at this time, Mr. George Sandys, the Company's Treasurer of Virginia, made his translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses, a very laudable performance for the times. In his dedication of that piece to King Charles the First, he tells him that it was limned by that imperfect light which was snatched from the hours of night and repose. For the day was not his own, but dedicated to the service of his father and himself; and had that service proved as fortunate as it was faithful in him, as well as others more worthy, they had hoped, before the revolution of many years, to have presented his Majesty with a rich and well peopled kingdom. But as things had turned, he had only been able to bring from thence himself and that composition, which needed more than a single denization. For it was doubly a stranger, being sprung from an ancient Roman stock, and bred up in the new world, of the rudeness whereof it could not but participate; especially as it was produced among wars and tumults, instead of under the kindly and peaceful influences of the Muses."

prominent in the early history of the colony, and in the war of the Revolution. His father, Colonel Robert Munford, a distinguished patriot, died when William was only eight years old ; the boy was therefore left in charge of his mother, an amiable and accomplished lady, who added to strong natural powers the best culture of the times, and a familiarity with the most polished society. The influence of this excellent person upon the character of her son was deep and lasting. Although her income was narrow, owing to the embarrassed circumstances in which the estate of her husband was left at his death, she resolved that her son should enjoy all the advantages of a liberal and classical education. Having completed his preparatory studies, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Cameron, at the Petersburg academy, he entered William and Mary's college, in Williamsburg. He displayed, very early in life, while yet at the academy, the same love of letters, and the same amiable qualities of character, which went with him through life. He was graduated at the college with high honors, and immediately commenced the study of the law, to which he had been destined, under Mr. Wythe, afterward the celebrated Chancellor, to whom he had become known during his residence in Williamsburg. The letters of young Munford show the cordial and intimate relations which existed between him and his venerable teacher, and which continued until the death of the latter, in 1806. In 1792, Mr. Munford removed to Richmond, Mr. Wythe having transferred his residence thither, on his appointment as Chancellor of the State ; but he returned afterwards to William and Mary, to attend the law lectures of Mr. St. George Tucker. Having completed his studies, he returned to his native county, and was called to the bar in the twentieth year of his age, and by his diligence, character, and ability soon secured a large practice. In 1797, he was elected a representative from the county of Mecklenburg to the House of Delegates, which place he continued to hold until 1802, when he was appointed a senator from the district in which he resided. In 1806, he was chosen by the legislature a member of the Privy Council of State, in which he continued until 1811, when he was elected clerk of the House of Delegates.* This office

* On the death of Mr. Munford, the House of Delegates, by a large majority, appointed his eldest son to the office, and he has held it ever since.

he held until his death. In addition to his numerous other labors, both professional and political, he was for several years the reporter of the decisions of the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia ; at first alone, and afterwards in connection with W. W. Henry. Six volumes of these reports were the fruit of his own labor, and four were prepared by him and Mr. Henry in conjunction. He resided in the city of Richmond during the last nineteen years of his life.

Mr. Munford acquired the respect of the community in which he lived, and of the State, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments, to a remarkable degree. The industry, integrity, and ability which he manifested as a professional man and as a legislator, the virtues that adorned his character in private life, the loveliness of his conduct in the domestic circle, caused him to be regarded with a peculiar warmth of affection by all who had the happiness to know him ; and after his death the bright example of his life became a precious legacy to his bereaved family, and a treasure of spotless reputation to the public which had for so many years benefited by his labors, his writings, his deeds of mercy and charity.

From his early childhood, Mr. Munford cherished an ardent love of literature. Through all the stages of public and professional life, amidst the cares of the family circle and the interests of philanthropy, the dignity of learning was never forgotten ; the graces which the Muse imparts to the common routine of toil and care were never by him neglected. Ancient literature was dear to him from early association and the cultivated tastes of maturer years ; and the best works of several modern languages occupied many of his leisure hours. But his favorite pursuit was the study of the Greek. The originality and splendor of Hellenic genius, the variety, beauty, and expressive power of the Greek language, the exquisite movements of its poetical rhythms, fascinated his mind, and excited an ardor of enthusiasm in his breast, which encouraged him to labor as few men have labored in its acquisition. But above all did he delight in the "Tale of Troy divine" ; that wondrous monument, standing unequalled in grandeur, as it stands solitary in the remotest age of history ; the creation of a genius never approached but once in the annals of literature. At an early period, he formed the design of translating the *Iliad*. He had always been fond of poetical

composition, and showed in youth considerable facility and elegance in versification. No translation with which he was familiar came up to his idea of what a translation of the *Iliad* ought to be ; and he determined to try his hand upon the often attempted, but as yet unexecuted task, of making a version which should at once be faithful and poetical, which should be both a fair representative of the incomparable original and an interesting English poem.

This was the great literary labor of Mr. Munford's life. It was completed, and the manuscript was prepared for the press, a short time before his death, which took place at his residence in Richmond, July 21st, 1825. This event, felt to be a heavy calamity to the commonwealth, to whose name his character and career are an honor, put a stop to the arrangements for publication, which had already been partially made. The manuscript remained in the state in which its author left it, until the present time. Mr. Munford's family, feeling a just pride in the good name of their deceased relative, have now paid the debt due to his memory, in a manner befitting the sentiment of reverence which they can never cease to entertain ; they have published his translation of the *Iliad* in a style of typographical beauty which its literary merit deserves. It is a work which will do honor not only to the name of its author, but to the literary reputation of the country ; and we feel it not only a duty, but a pleasure, to welcome its appearance at this time, by giving it whatever advantage it may derive from being heralded to the learned public in the pages of this Journal.

There are several considerations which should not be lost sight of in the examination of this work. It had not the advantage of being carried through the press by the author. Every person, accustomed to writing for the press, will at once feel how much a work of this extent loses for want of the finishing touches which the writer could have given to it, as it passed, sentence by sentence, under his critical eye, when every fault would be brought out into bold relief by the distinctness of type. In the next place, it should be remembered, that, during the twenty years that have elapsed since the translation was completed, the literature of Homer has been completely remodelled. A variety of questions, important to the exact appreciation of the poetic spirit and genius of the Homeric poetry, have been discussed with a keenness of

critical skill and a copiousness of learning quite unknown in former times. The point of view from which Homer is judged is very different now from what it was a quarter of a century ago ; and many opinions which were current then will hardly be admitted into the creed of classical scholarship of the present day. We can barely allude to this topic, because its full discussion would require more space than can now be given to it ; but the discriminating reader of Munford's *Iliad*, especially in the notes which he has added to the several books of his version, will be at no loss to apply this general plea in abatement of a rigid critical judgment.*

Our readers must not understand by these hints, that in our opinion the translation by Mr. Munford needs to be excused for important defects. Judged by itself, and without reference to the circumstances in which it was left and has now been published, it is an excellent version of *the poet*. Mr. Munford had studied the poem until he had imbued his own mind with its fiery spirit. He loved, passionately loved, the immortal rhapsodies which illustrate so magnificently the genius of that distant, and, but for *their* radiance, that dark and unknown age. He was familiarly conversant with the best existing text, which had been his favorite reading the greater part of his life. The older commentaries had been weighed by him with conscientious and judicial deliberation and impartiality. He applied himself, therefore, to the selected labor of his hours of relaxation from the sterner duties of the forum, well equipped with the learning of his time, and carried into the Homeric cause the earnestness, the fidelity, and the love of truth, which marked the routine of his daily business. His poetical style is formed upon the models most in vogue in his day. It has great merits, and some defects. It is rich and rhythmical, stately, and often remarkably expressive. Sometimes it reminds us of the noble march of Milton's

* The subject of the Homeric poetry has been repeatedly handled with great ability by the German scholars. Nitsch, Lachmann, K. O. Müller, Wilhelm Müller, and others, have thrown much light upon it. A condensed and most able judgment on the various questions involved in the Homeric discussions is contained in Mr. Grote's *History of Greece* (Vol. II., pp. 159 – 277). This long expected work, only two volumes of which have yet appeared, promises to be a valuable and important addition to English historical literature. It shows ample and well digested learning, a candid spirit, and is written in a style marked by a dignified elegance well suited to historical composition.

verse ; and we have no doubt the *Paradise Lost* was one of the favorite companions of Mr. Munford's literary hours. In the selection of single words, Mr. Munford is for the most part very happy ; long passages might be pointed out, wherein no completing touch of the master's hand is wanting ; the magnificent conceptions of the great original are so thoroughly rendered, with every heightening felicity of epithet, rhythm, and sound that echoes the sense.

But Mr. Munford's style is not uniformly so well adapted to render the Homeric poetry. Indeed, no modern style can perfectly reproduce the Homeric. The Grecian epic was in its day the most popular form of story-telling, for the entertainment of assemblies of men, on festive occasions. In quantity, it was as abundant as the modern novel ; in quality, it had, of course, various degrees of merit. It was delivered in a species of musical recitative, with a slight accompaniment of the phorminx, the cithern of the heroic age. The language was descriptive, melodious, and rich ; strikingly objective, or concrete, in its general character, and admirably suited to charm the ear and delight the imagination of a simple, gay, and beauty-loving people. " Almost five centuries had passed," says Frederic Jacobs, " before the poems of Homer were imprisoned in written characters ; and even then, mindful of their original destination, they flowed more sweetly from the tongue to the ear." To produce the whole original effect of the Homeric epic — for the Homeric poems, the noblest of their class, doubtless, are now the only representatives of the *vocal* literature of heroic Greece — would require the reproduction of the circumstances and character of the Homeric age ; of the copious and graphic dialect, which is said by the great scholar just quoted to " resemble the smooth mirror of a broad and silent lake, from whose depth a serene sky, with its soft and sunny vault, and the varied nature along its sunny shores, are reflected in transfigured beauty " ; it would require the restoration of the lost magic of the heroic hexameter, that marvellous rhythm, whose varying music was consecrated to epic verse until the civilization of the ancient world was buried under the barbarism of the Middle Ages ; finally, it would require the restoration of the Ionic mind and life, with its joyous festivities, its *panegyrical* assemblies, its dances, and the altars of the gods, its religious rites, its freedom from care, its youthful

enjoyments, its picturesque environment, and its sunny skies.

All this the modern student must *study himself into*, by a long and laborious process ; but however vividly these recovered influences may act upon the translator's mind, he cannot adequately transfer them to the untrained mind of the common reader. The Homeric poetry, however, is so essentially popular, it is so deeply grounded in the universal nature of man, it speaks so strongly to the common passions of the human heart, that whatever is local, temporary, and accidental may be set aside in the general estimate of its power to engage the interest of hearers or readers ; and so it has come to pass, that, in the long procession of the ages, the Homeric poetry, amidst the altered relations of the world, is now the most popular poetry for reading in the closet, as it was in its own day the most popular poetry for the rhythmical chanting of the minstrels in the festive halls, or under the open sky at the *panegyreis*, or at the great Panathenaic gatherings in the violet-crowned city.

Every cultivated language of modern Europe possesses translations of Homer. But the artificially formed languages of modern European poetry are not precisely the vehicles for the peculiar and unrivalled simplicity of Homer. The ballad styles of the minstrels and Minnesingers approach, in their objective character and pictorial effect, the Ionian of the Grecian epic ; but they lack the artistic completeness and rhythmical perfection which Grecian genius knew how to stamp upon its earliest productions. The accentual principles of the modern versification — principles adopted even by the Greeks since the thirteenth century — are wholly inadequate to produce the effect of the ancient musical *quantity*. This subject we have discussed at some length, in a former number of the Review, and we can make only a passing allusion to it here.

In English, we possess a number of versions of Homer, made on different principles, and with different ends in view. The two most popular are Pope's and Cowper's. Several specimens of translation in the ballad style, very happily executed, were published a few years ago in Fraser's Magazine. This style is excellent for short passages, but would not probably sustain itself through a series of cantos. A late number of one of the English monthly journals contains speci-

mens of translations into English hexameters. This style is not entirely new in English ; but no very successful feat has yet been accomplished in it.* To the Germans this measure has long been familiar. The best poets of that nation have written freely and skilfully in hexameters ; but as the modern hexameter is founded almost, if not quite, exclusively on accent, as quantity is not a fixed element of modern pronunciation, — it is probable that both German and English hexameters possess only a remote resemblance to the chanted rhythms of Homer. Voss, however, notwithstanding Menzel's pungent criticism, enjoys a great reputation as a faithful translator of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* ; and it must be confessed, that a reader familiar with the original finds more in such a version to remind him of the sounding march of Homer's lines, than in the flowing couplets of Pope, or the creeping blank verse of Cowper. A late number of Blackwood's Magazine contains a translation of the twenty-fourth book of the *Iliad*, in hexameters, — the most successful attempt of this sort we have yet met with in English. It may not be without interest to our readers to compare the translations by different writers of the same passage, — it must necessarily be a short one. They will thus be able to judge of the different principles which have guided the translators in the execution of their tasks. For the purpose of including in this survey the hexameters of Blackwood, we select the opening of the last book of the *Iliad*. Literally rendered, the lines are as follows :—

The assembly broke up, and the people each to their swift ships
Scattered to go ; and they bethought them of supper
And sweet sleep to enjoy ; but Achilles

* In 1583, Richard Stanyhurst published "The first foure Bookes of Virgil's *Æneis*, translated into English heroicall verse ; with other poetick devises thereunto annexed." He selected Virgil as "a Latinist fit to give the onset on," because he, "for his perelesse stile and matchlesse stuffe, doth beare the pricke and price among all the Romane poets."

Some of this "matchlesse stuffe" is the following description of an eruption of Mount *Ætna*.

"Neere joyntlye brayeth with rufflerye rumboled *Ætna* :
Soomtyme owt it bolcketh from bulck clouds grimly bedimmed,
Like fyerd pitche skorching, or flash flame sulphurus heating :
Flownce to the stars towring thee fire like a pellet is hurled,
Ragd rocks up raking, and guts of mounten yrented
From roote up he jogleth : stoans hudge slag molten he rowseth,
With route snort grumblng, in bottom flash furie kindling."

Wept, remembering his dear companion ; nor him did sleep
 Seize, all-subduing ; but he turned hither and thither,
 Sighing for the manliness and brave spirit of Patroclus ;
 And how much he had toiled with him, and suffered pains,
 Fighting the battles of men, and crossing the sorrowful waves.
 These remembering, he shed the copious tear,
 Now lying on his side, and now again
 Supine, and now prone ; and then, starting upright,
 He roamed distraught the shore of the sea ; nor by him was
 Aurora

Unobserved, appearing above the sea and the shores ;
 But when he had yoked the swift steeds to the chariot,
 And had bound Hector to trail behind the car,
 Thrice having dragged him around the tomb of dead Menoitiaes,
 Again in his tent he rested.

Chapman and Hobbes are among the oldest translators.
 Chapman belongs to the Elizabethan age, having been born in
 1557. His translation is vigorous, and often very felicitous ;
 though, taken as a whole, it is heavy reading. He thus ren-
 ders the passage in question :—

“ The games performed, the soldiers wholly dispersed to fleet,
 Supper and sleep their only care. Constant Achilles yet
 Wept for his friend ; nor sleep itself, that all things doth subdue,
 Could touch at him. This way and that he turned, and did renew
 His friend's dear memory ; his grace in managing his strength,
 And his strength's greatness. How life rack'd into their utmost
 length

Griefs, battles, and the wraths of seas, in their joint sufferance,
 Each thought of which turned to a tear. Sometimes he would
 advance

(In tumbling on the shore) his side, sometimes his face, then turn
 Flat on his bosom, start upright. Although he saw the morn
 Show sea and shore his ecstasy, he left not till at last
 Rage varied his distraction. Horse, chariot, in haste
 He called for ; and (those joined) the corse was to his chariot
 tied,

And thrice about the sepulchre he made his fury ride,
 Dragging the person.

Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher of Malmesbury, and
 author of the *Leviathan*, was born in 1588. He translated
 Homer into alternately rhyming verses of ten syllables. His
 style is hard and bald, and utterly wanting in the char-

acteristics of poetic expression. For example, the passage in which Achilles speaks of the "two urns, one of good, and another of ills, which stand in the hall of Zeus," Hobbes drolly renders,

"Two barrels in his cellar Jove has still
Of gifts to be bestowed on mortal wights."

The lines of which Chapman's version is cited above are thus rendered by the philosopher : —

"Thus end the games. The Greeks dispersed are,
And every man returned to his tent,
And busie was his supper to prepare ;
And after they had supped, to bed they went.
Achilles all the night slept not a wink,
But on Patroclus' worth and company,
And on their common sufferings, still did think,
And lay upon his bed unquietly.
And weeping, sometimes laid himself on this,
Sometimes on that side, sometimes on his face,
And sometimes on his back, and sometimes ris,
And walkt upon the shore from place to place ;
And soon as ere he saw the morning come,
He Hector to his charret ti'd again
And dragg'd him thrice about Patroclus' tomb,
And then went in, and left him on the plain."

This sort of version did not satisfy the fastidious ears of good Queen Anne's generation. Let us see how Pope deals with the passage : —

"Now from the finished games the Grecian band
Seek their black ships, and clear the crowded strand ;
All stretched at ease the genial banquet share,
And pleasing slumbers quiet all their care.
Not so Achilles ; he, to grief resigned,
His friend's dear image present to his mind,
Takes his sad couch, more unobserved to weep ;
Nor tastes the gifts of all-composing sleep.
Restless he rolled around his weary bed,
And all his soul on his Patroclus fed ;
The form so pleasing, and the heart so kind,
That youthful vigor, and that manly mind,
What toils they shared, what martial works they wrought,
What seas they measured, and what fields they fought,
All passed before him in remembrance dear ;

Thought follows thought, and tear succeeds to tear ;
 And now supine, now prone, the hero lay,
 Now shifts his side, impatient for the day ;
 Then starting up disconsolate he goes
 Wide on the lonely beach to vent his woes.
 There as the solitary mourner raves,
 The ruddy morning rises o'er the waves ;
 Soon as it rose, his furious steeds he joined ;
 The chariot flies, and Hector trails behind,
 And thrice, Patroclus, round thy monument
 Was Hector dragged, then hurried to the tent."

Cowper, in a less ambitious spirit, thus translates : —

"The games all closed, the people went dispersed
 Each to his ship ; they mindful of repast,
 And to enjoy repose ; but other thoughts
 Achilles' mind employed ; he still deplored
 With tears his loved Patroclus, nor the force
 Felt of all-conquering sleep, but turned and turned
 Restless from side to side, mourning the loss
 Of such a friend, so manly and so brave ;
 Their fellowship in toil ; their hardships oft
 Sustained in fight laborious, or o'ercome
 With difficulty on the perilous deep ; —
 Remembrance busily retracing themes
 Like these drew down his cheeks continual tears ;
 Now on his side he lay, now lay supine,
 Now prone ; then starting from his couch he roamed
 Forlorn the beach ; nor did the rising morn
 On seas and shores escape his watchful eye,
 But, joining to his chariot his swift steeds,
 He fastened Hector to be dragged behind ;
 Around the tomb of Menoitides
 Him thrice he dragged ; then rested in his tent."

Mr. Sotheby, previously known as the translator of Wieland's *Oberon*, attempted to combine in his version of the *Iliad* the fidelity of Cowper and the poetry of Pope. This translation, though careful and elaborate, is frequently stiff. The parallel passage in his *Iliad* runs as follows : —

"The games now closed, the Grecians sought their tent,
 And to their feast or soothing slumber went ;
 But not the power of all-subduing sleep
 E'er closed Peleides' eye, who woke to weep.

He, inconsolable, untimely left,
 Of all his heart most loved by death bereft,
 Knew not repose, but, wearied out with woe,
 Tost, ever-rolling, restless, to and fro ;
 And more and more, Patroclus' loss to mourn,
 Recalled their various toils together borne, —
 What glorious battles fought, what victories gained,
 And on the boundless deep what dangers both sustained.
 Still recollecting these, he watched, he wept,
 While his worn limbs no peaceful posture kept ;
 Now on his side, and now supine, now prone,
 Now starting up, the wanderer strayed alone
 Along the beach of the resounding shore,
 Unheard the ocean's melancholy roar ;
 But not unmindful when the dawn of day
 Stretched o'er the sea and shore its rising ray,
 He back returned, and yoked his steeds of war,
 And bound the Hectorean limbs behind his car ;
 Thrice dragged the corse Patroclus' tomb around,
 Then sought his tent and cast him on the ground."

Now, as old Michael Drayton says to George Sandys,

"Let's see what lines Virginia will produce."

Mr. Munford's version is : —

"The games were finish'd ; to their several ships
 Dispersing went the multitude ; and they
 The banquet there and sweet repose enjoy'd ;
 But, comfortless, remembering still his friend,
 Achilles wept. To sleep's all-ruling sway
 He yielded not, but turn'd from side to side,
 Regretting brave Patroclus' manly form
 And martial spirit, now for ever flown.
 Revolving pensively the toils and woes
 He bore with him, in wars of heroes bold,
 And voyages upon the stormy main,
 A flood of tears he shed ; this way and that,
 Tossing incessantly, supine or prone,
 Or on his sides alternately outstretch'd.
 Then, starting up, with tortur'd heart he roam'd,
 Disconsolate, the lonely sea-beat coast ;
 Nor fail'd to watch Aurora's earliest ray
 Obscurely glimmering on the restless waves
 And misty shores of ocean. Coupling then

His fiery coursers to the car, he dragg'd
 The corse of Hector in its rear again ;
 And three times trailing it around the tomb
 Of dead Patroclus, to his tent return'd."

Vol. II., pp. 473-474.

We close this comparative survey by giving the corresponding hexameters from Blackwood.

"Now the assembly dissolv'd ; and the multitude rose and disperst
 them,
 Each making speed to the ships, for the needful refreshment of
 nature,
 Food and the sweetness of sleep ; but alone in his tent was Achilles,
 Weeping the friend that he lov'd ; nor could sleep, the subduer
 of all things,
 Master his grief ; but he turn'd him continually hither and thither,
 Thinking of all that was gracious and brave in departed Patroclus,
 And of the manifold days they two had been toilsomely comrades,
 Both in the battles of men and the perilous tempests of ocean.
 Now on his side, and anon on his back, or with countenance
 downward,
 Prone in his anguish he sank : then suddenly starting, he wander'd,
 Desolate, forth by the shore ; till he noted the burst of the morning
 As on the waters it gleam'd, and the surf-beaten length of the
 sand-beach.
 Instantly then did he harness his swift-footed horses, and corded
 Hector in the rear of the car, to be dragg'd at the wheels in dis-
 honor
 Thrice at the speed he encircled the tomb of the son of Menœtius,
 Ere he repos'd him again in his tent, and abandon'd the body,
 Flung on its face in the dust ; but not unobserv'd of Apollo."

Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. LIX., p. 260.

Our limits will not permit us to quote at length from Mr. Munford's translation. We can give only a few disjointed extracts, to show the ability with which he has accomplished his undertaking.

"Meanwhile the people throng'd, like humming tribes
 Of swarming bees, when from a hollow rock
 They pour incessantly, fresh numbers still
 Succeeding without end, and restless fly
 In clust'ring throngs among the flowers of spring ;
 Some here, some there, a countless multitude.
 So then the numerous tribes from tents and ships

Pour'd thronging forth, along the winding shore
Of vast extent. Among them, Fame herself
Conspicuous flam'd, (Jove's messenger,) to march
Exciting all : they crowding hurried on.
Tumultuous was the concourse ; when they sat,
The ground beneath the mighty numbers groan'd,
And loud their clamor rose. Nine heralds there
Vociferous warn'd them, with commanding shouts,
To cease that uproar, and attentive hear
Their Jove-instructed kings. At length controll'd,
They kept their seats in peace, and all was hush'd."

"The mighty numbers mov'd
Like billows huge upon th' Icarian main,
When, rushing from the stormy clouds on high,
Assembled by their father Jove, the winds,
Eurus and Notus, heave the troubled deep.
As when the western blast, with rapid sway
Descending, sweeps a wide-spread field of corn,
Bending the yielding harvest, so the crowd
Immense commotion seiz'd ! With joyful cries
All hurried to the ships : beneath their feet
Thick dust arose, and form'd a standing cloud.
They call'd each other speedily to seize
The ships, and launch them to the boundless main.
The work was soon commenced, and, from their keels
Imbedded, scoop'd the sand : shrill clamors reach'd
The lofty skies, of men returning home !"

"To the place of concourse they
From ships and tents returning rush'd with noise,
As when loud-sounding Ocean's stormy waves
Burst, roaring, on the wide reëchoing shore."

"Among them flew
Blue-eyed Minerva ! On her powerful arm
The blazing Ægis, ever new and bright,
Precious, eternal ! Round its ample verge
A hundred fringes shone, of heavenly gold,
Inimitably wrought : with mortals, each
Were worth a hecatomb. She, arm'd with this,
Flew swiftly through Achaia's host, to arms
Exciting all, and every Greek inspir'd
With valor, war unceasing to maintain.
More sweet to them the bloody contest seem'd
Than e'en rejoicing in their hollow ships

To their dear native country to return !
 As raging fire consumes a wide-spread wood,
 On some high mountain's summit, whence the blaze
 Is seen afar ; so, from their burnish'd arms
 With radiant glories gleam'd effulgent light,
 Flaming through æther to the vault of heaven !
 And as unnumber'd flocks of swift-wing'd birds,
 Geese, cranes, or stately swans with arching necks,
 In Asius' meadow 'round Caÿster's streams,
 Fly here and there, exulting on the wing,
 And (while with clamor they alight) the fields
 Their cries reëcho ; so the numerous tribes
 Of Greeks, from ships and tents outpouring, throng'd
 Scamander's plain. The ground, with dreadful din,
 Sounded beneath the feet of bounding steeds
 And trampling warriors. Numberless they stood,
 Covering that verdant meadow, as the leaves
 And flowers of spring, or as the countless swarms
 Of restless flies that in a shepherd's fold
 At summer eve, when milk bedews the pails,
 Play infinite ! So numerous were the Greeks,
 Ardent for battle, breathing dire revenge
 And death against the Trojans. Them their chiefs
 With ease distinguish'd, and in order plac'd,
 As skilful herdsmen readily select
 From hundreds mingled in their pastures wide,
 Each his own flock of goats ; the chieftains so
 Their troops collected, and for fight arrang'd.
 Among them royal Agamemnon shone ;
 In brow and awful look, resembling Jove
 The thunderer ; in armor, Mars himself ;
 In port majestic, Neptune ! As a bull
 Appears preëminent o'er all his herd,
 So great Atrides, on that signal day,
 Among so many heroes was by Jove
 With glory crown'd, excelling all the rest."

Vol. I., pp. 38 - 54.

A few remarks more upon Mr. Munford's work, with one or two illustrative passages, must close this hasty and rambling notice. We have spoken, in general terms, of its merits ; and though these far outweigh and outnumber its defects, it is but just that a word should be said of the latter. Mr. Munford's elaborate versification is admirable in the statelier parts of the *Iliad* ; in the animated battle-pieces ; in the

picturesque delineation of the grander features of natural scenery, or the commotion of the elements. But his style is not sufficiently flexible to represent with equal felicity the simple narrative portions, and to render with Homeric naturalness the homelier details of daily life, so significant of the peculiar genius of the ancient epic. Homer goes to work in the most business-like fashion, and always calls things by their plainest names ; and this is just the most perplexing thing to do, in an artificial age, and with a *cultured* style. The problem is difficult, and perhaps cannot be perfectly solved. If Mr. Munford has failed, he has failed where no one has succeeded.

It must also be confessed that Mr. Munford's versification becomes at times monotonous. His rhythms have not sufficient variety. True, no modern rhythms can give back the ever-changing charm of the Homeric hexameter ; but the English ten-syllable blank verse is capable of representing to a considerable extent the varied movement of the Greek, by varying the cæsural pause.

A few trivial faults more, and our critical conscience will be at rest. We have here and there noticed a touch of modern sentiment incongruously embroidered upon the unromantic plainness of Homer ; as,

“ He fell with failing limbs
And joints relaxed, *and sighed his soul away* ” ;

Homer says simply “ and life his body left.”
And in another place,

“ Enjoyed with mutual bliss in Cranaë's isle
Thy heaven of charms, as now I love thee dear.”

In managing the proper names, the laws of quantity are often violated ; though, in many cases, the Greek accentuation may be pleaded in justification. Pylæmenes, for example, which would commonly be accented on the antepenultimate syllable, the penult being short, is read Pylæmènes by Mr. Munford ; and the same syllable is accented in the Greek. But this excuse will not hold in other cases, as Neritus, pronounced Nerítus, by Mr. Munford. All these slight defects might easily have been removed, had the work enjoyed the advantage of a final revision by the author.